

MONSTROUS SCALLIPSES

RAISA FARZANA

Monstrous Scallipses only comes out during the night,
It's so viscous, mighty and dangerous to fight.
Had any legend or brave ever told its tale,
There was only one survivor who returned so frail.
It had numerous perceptive eyes dotted around the head,
Two enormous fangs from where poison is spread.
It's always on the watch, its nose is active too,
Not to mention its ears that hear the tap of shoes!
Its body is full of scales, thorns and fur,
This monster is quiet, and barely makes a purr.
It has seven arms in total, with 2 fingers in each,
Ten miniature legs which are barely of reach!
Beware, beware, don't go off wandering at night,
Watch out for the Monstrous and its viscous bite!
It lives in the forests, but its habitats are unknown,
That is because it is huge and is extremely outgrown.
It has special powers that help it to survive.
Camouflage and strength is what it uses to thrive.
There are only five of them left out in the wild,
You better be serious, don't take it so mild.
Beware, beware, I am warning you again,
Whether you kill it or live with the pain.
If you have a brave amongst you, join the battle wing.
Whoever kills the beast tomorrow, will become our king.

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ILLUSTRATION: **RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS**

Memoir of a Songbird Named Childhood



MALIHA TRIBHU

I remember.

I remember that rugged chalkboard by my bedside. Written on it was a rhyme, ABCDEFG... IJKLOMOP... See I knew the alphabets and I'd sing them just the way my mother taught me to.

I remember the broken crayons laying all over the floor, along with some scattered papers and pencils -- I painted a house; a tree; some birds; a river and a sunset.

I've always loved painting sunset as it was filled with so many colours. I loved colours. I'd use as many colours as I could to make the paintings alive.

"Ma! I made another drawing!"

She loved it. She absolutely loved it. I knew it by the look in her eyes. Even with the exhausts of life she still smiled the same. Every time she saw my "red-painted house" she'd give me a kiss on the forehead.

I remember the sparrow on my balcony. We'd play hide and seek but I never won. Every time I caught up to her she was already gone.

I remember those paper made aeroplanes that never flew too far, crash landing upon busy roads, crumbled upon tire-tracks, left unnoticed.

I remember thunderstorms and rain. Me hiding under my blanket, peeking through again and again,

"Will the monster under my bed crawl up to me tonight?"

I remember my brand new Eid dress that I'd show to no one.

"Mine's the best," I'd say.

I remember dreams that came by the

night and I'd write about them lest I should forget the memories that were too precious!

What I can't remember though, how the changes shifted and nothing was there anymore. As if I stood there, quietly observing the fabrications of my childhood slowly disappearing into thin air. And then the utter voidance takes over these four-chambered walls.

Oh childhood! I remember everything about it. Except how it changed, how I changed and became this person.

People exhaust me, mother barely smiles. Even if I hug her tight, she seems weary somehow; aged and weak.

I barely find words to speak as if I've made myself used to being so quiet that even I cannot hear myself. Thunderstorms don't keep me awake anymore, my own thoughts do. The monsters don't live under my bed anymore, they live in me.

The broken crayons remain untouched, canvas unpainted, colours faded; as weary as my mother's smile.

I remember the nightmares that came by the night; never letting me sleep. I try to forget all about it yet end up being completely devoured by them.

Eid feels like just another occasion to stay in bed all day. I don't wish to neither see people nor greet them. I hide away just like my Eid dress. Washed, ironed, and hidden -- never wanting to be worn out.

I remember every bit of my childhood like a distant dream, almost non-existent.

Yet I do not remember how I've become this person.

The writer studies Marketing at the University of Dhaka.